

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of creating a pathway in a tract of an animal, useful in association with a catheter having a tube coupled to a membrane initially positioned substantially inside the tube, the method comprising:

inserting the tube into a tract of the animal; and

extending the membrane from an opening in the tube and into the tract, thereby creating the pathway in the tract, and wherein the membrane is extended in the tract without sliding action between the membrane and the tract, and wherein the membrane is configured to herniate when the membrane encounters an obstruction in the tract, thereby clearing the obstruction and enabling the membrane to continue to extend.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the extension of the membrane is caused by pressure.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the tract is the cervical tract of the animal.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the animal is a sow.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the tube has a nozzle located at the opening of the tube.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the membrane wall thickness is tapered.

7. The method of claim 3 further comprising depositing genetic material into the animal.

8. A catheter useful for creating a pathway in a tract of an animal, the catheter comprising:

a tube configured to be inserted into the tract of the animal; and

a membrane initially positioned inside the tube, the membrane configured to extend from an opening in the tube and into the tract, wherein the membrane extends without sliding action between the membrane and the tract, and wherein the membrane wall thickness is tapered away from the tube opening.

9. The catheter of claim 8 wherein the membrane has an open tip.

10. The catheter of claim 8 wherein the membrane has a closed tip.

11. The catheter of claim 8 wherein the extension of the membrane is caused by pressure.

12. The catheter of claim 8 wherein the tract is the cervical tract of the animal.

13. The catheter of claim 12 wherein the animal is a sow.

14. The catheter of claim 8 wherein the tube has a nozzle located at the opening of the tube.

15. The catheter of claim 8 wherein the nozzle has a positioning ring configured to mate with a corresponding positioning ring on the tube.

16. The catheter of claim 12 wherein the membrane is configured to deposit genetic material into the animal.